



Congressman Tim Bishop

FIRST DISTRICT -- NEW YORK

NEWS RELEASE

FEBRUARY 15, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: JON SCHNEIDER
(631) 696-6500

BISHOP HOSTS TWO WORKSHOPS TO HELP FIRST RESPONDERS

Over 25 Departments Turn Out for Funding Information

Coram, NY— Congressman Tim Bishop recently hosted two grant workshops to introduce the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program to Long Island first responders. Over 25 Fire Departments and related organizations attended the workshops held at the Riverhead Fire Department and Yaphank Fire Rescue Office. Bishop and representatives from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Domestic Preparedness outlined the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, including the application process.

"I believe it is essential to get as many grants for Long Island's first responders as possible," Bishop said. "I am glad that so many of our first responders took time out of their busy schedules to learn about the funding opportunities that may be available to their departments. These volunteers are real heroes in our community."

Departments in attendance included Jamesport FD, Shelter Island FD, North Sea FD, Ocean Beach FD, Brookhaven FD, Southampton FD, Ronkonkoma FD, Oyster Bay FD, North Lindenhurst FD, Suffolk County Fire Academy, Northport FD, Islip Terrace FD, Bay Shore/Brightwaters Ambulance, Port Jefferson Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Westhampton Beach FD, East Quogue, Mount Sinai FD, Mattituck FD, Port Jefferson FD, Hagerman FD, North Patchogue FD, Orient FD, and Gordon Heights FD. Representatives from Stony Brook University, Riverhead Town, LI MacArthur Aiport were in attendance as well.

The workshops have been extremely successful. In just Bishop's first term, ten local fire departments received nearly \$765,000 collectively. Grants in Bishop's first term ranged from \$18,000 to over \$214,000.

Bishop also vowed to fight to restore funding for this important program for first responders. Last year, the AFG was funded at \$750 million. However, in the budget recently submitted by President Bush, the program was cut by \$250 million, a 33% cut for aid to first responders.

"Our first responders are on the frontline of our Homeland Security efforts, and we need to give them the resources they need to protect our communities," Bishop said. "I will work together with other leaders in Congress and make sure we properly support our first responders."

Federal funding is available to fire departments for such purposes as health and safety programs, the purchase of new fire equipment, the enhancement of EMS programs, increasing the effectiveness of fire fighter operations and support of fire prevention and safety programs.

Those interested in attending future workshops or in learning more about the grants process should call the Congressman's District Office in Coram at 631-696-6500. Additional information about the fire grant program may be obtained through the Internet at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/> or by contacting the Office for Domestic Preparedness AFG Program at (866) 274-0960.

#